

Strategy Research Project

Building Partner Capacity through Combat Training Centers

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: A

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				<i>Form Approved</i> OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 19-03-2012		2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Building Partner Capacity through Combat Training Centers				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Colonel John K. Lange				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Colonel Tarn D. Warren Department of Military Strategy, Planning, & Operations				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College 122 Forbes Avenue Carlisle, PA 17013				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution: A					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT To achieve strategic objectives, the U.S. forms effective coalitions with our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners and builds their capacity before the battle through strategic engagement involving all the instruments of national power. At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) maintained significant capability to engage with these emerging partners. Anticipating decreased available military resources in the USEUCOM footprint, what are the best ways and means to execute a productive military-to-military engagement strategy that continues to build our partners' capacity? What means and ways provide our partners with self-sustainable capability that maintains trust and ensures willingness to meet NATO obligations in unknown future security dilemmas? This research project examines current USEUCOM security cooperation ways and means. It considers the impact of decreasing resources on the current strategy and offers an alternative for less resource intensive, high impact partner capacity building by developing maneuver combat training center capacity in our partners.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Security Cooperation, Combat Training Center, NATO, Security Assistance, Building Partner Capacity, Partnership, Military Engagement, Coalition					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UNLIMITED	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 36	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY THROUGH COMBAT TRAINING CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel John K. Lange

TITLE: Building Partner Capacity through Combat Training Centers

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 19 March 2012 WORD COUNT: 6,959 PAGES: 36

KEY TERMS: Security Cooperation, Combat Training Center, NATO, Security Assistance, Building Partner Capacity, Partnership, Military Engagement, Coalition

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

To achieve strategic objectives, the U.S. forms effective coalitions with our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners and builds their capacity before the battle through strategic engagement involving all the instruments of national power. At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) maintained significant capability to engage with these emerging partners. Anticipating decreased available military resources in the USEUCOM footprint, what are the best ways and means to execute a productive military-to-military engagement strategy that continues to build our partners' capacity? What means and ways provide our partners with self-sustainable capability that maintains trust and ensures willingness to meet NATO obligations in unknown future security dilemmas? This research project examines current USEUCOM security cooperation ways and means. It considers the impact of decreasing resources on the current strategy and offers an alternative for less resource intensive, high impact partner capacity building by developing maneuver combat training center capacity in our partners.

BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY THROUGH COMBAT TRAINING CENTERS

Much has been written in the last ten years about operational and tactical application of security assistance to build partner capacity (BPC) in developing security forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and other theaters of importance to extract United States forces from combat and stability operations. These operations to prepare our partners for the transition of security responsibilities to them, a pre-condition for U.S. withdrawal, provide a wealth of documented experience, general rules and explicit techniques, tactics and procedures to achieve the desired partner capacity in the context of those operational theaters. There is a greater scope of security assistance and partner capacity building that requires examination to refine how we succeed in these activities to achieve the prevention and shaping goals that support U.S. objectives in every region of the globe.

Security cooperation, assistance and partner capacity building have taken on new importance as the nation has refined its defense strategic guidance in light of economic and resource constraints, changing priorities and hard decisions that affect the ways and means available, especially for the Department of Defense (DoD), in the coming decades. Security cooperation activities conducted by the United States with long-standing and developing North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners provide insight into cost-effective ways to develop capacity in our partners. The current record of constructive application of NATO partner capabilities in multinational efforts demonstrate the value of examining U.S. capacity building methods for application with partners in other regions.

Current operations demonstrate the need for the United States to form effective coalitions with our NATO partners to achieve strategic objectives. Effective coalitions and partner capacity are built before crisis through strategic engagement involving all the instruments of national power. Since the end of the Cold War, new partners have joined NATO's ranks and committed themselves to efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The United States European Command (USEUCOM) conducts an engagement strategy to build trust and improve military capability in our new partners. Historically, this engagement strategy has relied upon a significant forward-stationed U.S. military presence in Europe, providing readily available joint forces to conduct a broad array of engagement activities. On January 5, 2012, President Obama presented new defense strategic guidance that alters the conditions and resources upon which USEUCOM's security cooperation strategy was based.

This new defense strategic guidance (DSG), entitled "Sustaining Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," defines shifting regional priorities to the Asia-Pacific, envisions a smaller but capable Joint Force, and outlines core national security interests.¹ While significantly affecting resources available to USEUCOM, the guidance stipulates the necessity of maintaining a strong and vital NATO alliance even while we "...rebalance the U.S. military investment in Europe."² Anticipating decreased budgetary resources and a continued drawdown of forward deployed U.S. forces in the USEUCOM footprint, what are the best ways and means to execute a productive military-to-military engagement strategy that continues to develop the capacity of our NATO partners? What means and methods provide them with self-sustainable capability improvements that maintain their trust in us and ensure their future

willingness to meet NATO obligations in Afghanistan and unknown future security dilemmas?

As part of USEUCOM's engagement strategy, The United States Army in Europe (USAREUR) has leveraged one powerful way of influencing our partners through military-to-military, multinational collective training events at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) maneuver combat training center in Hohenfels, Germany, which is part of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command (7A JMTC). This U.S. combat training center produces significant tactical proficiency and capability in the military forces of our partners that train there. These multinational training events have not only improved unit proficiency and interoperability, the outcomes of these exercises have encouraged the military and civilian defense leadership of many partner nations to pursue the development of their own maneuver combat training center capability based on the unique U.S. model. Assisting our partners in development of their own combat training centers offers a way to significantly build capabilities that produce lasting capacity in our partners for a small investment. As the United States looks for innovative and low cost ways to develop capability and capacity in our partners around the globe, the 7A JMTC model provides a promising example.

Implications of the Defense Strategic Guidance

The DSG formally publicizes United States security policy decisions previously hinted at by the administration as a result of a review directed by President Obama. International and domestic influences are shaping a fundamental transition in the focus of American foreign policy of the last six decades away from Europe. The administration's redefinition of focus and priorities is influenced by the drawdown operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the relative stability of current U.S. and Russian

relations, emerging Chinese economic and military prominence in the Asia-Pacific region, and economic difficulties at home which challenge our nation's available ways and means to meet our national objectives. Both the Secretary of State³ and the National Security Advisor⁴ communicated our intent to shift the focus of our foreign policy toward Asia and the Pacific rim in articles published in November of 2011.

Building on a trend in previous security strategy documents and these public announcements, the DSG formalizes a policy focus shift toward the Asia-Pacific, announces our intention to decrease our military presence in Europe and the Middle East, and emphasizes our increased reliance for security on partnership with others. As a result, it reinforces the theme of developing the security capabilities of others that permits greater burden sharing of security interests. Cooperation with willing and capable partners is the keystone to our future security and the key to achieving willing and capable partners is U.S. security cooperation efforts to build their own capability and capacity.

Comprehensive efforts to build partnership and partner capacity are critical to the success of the strategic approach outlined in the 2010 National Security Strategy (NSS). It describes a strategic approach that achieves four enduring national interests of security, economic prosperity, respect for universal values, and maintenance of a stable international order through comprehensive engagement efforts based upon a strong national foundation.⁵ Security and a stable international order set favorable and necessary conditions for the growth of our economic prosperity and projection of our values. The strategy acknowledges that these condition-setting interests will be

achieved only through comprehensive, multilateral efforts with our allies, partners and potential partners globally.

Sustained engagement yields important outcomes including improved partner capabilities, constructive influence with our partners' military and civilian leadership, and access to facilities and resources that prove critical in times of crisis. The 2008 National Defense Strategy (NDS) clearly outlines the importance of achieving these outcomes to influence the choices of key states and maintain strategic access and freedom of U.S. action.⁶ Deliberate engagement to build partner capacity includes a broad range of tools across the spectrum of national instruments of power. In an effort to develop capable partners, the U.S. employs security cooperation and assistance programs aimed at their abilities to secure themselves and to contribute to multinational responses to security challenges regionally and globally.

Security Cooperation, Assistance and Capacity Building Defined

As defined in Joint Publication 1-02, the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, security cooperation consists of all DoD interactions with foreign militaries that promote U.S. security interests through relationships, improved partner military capabilities, and assured access for U.S. forces to critical locations required for peacetime or contingency operations.⁷ Security assistance is an element of security cooperation comprised of legislatively approved and funded programs to provide equipment, training and defense-related services by grant, loan or cash sales.⁸

Under the aegis of security cooperation, U.S. military engagement takes the form of security force assistance, defined in Joint Publication 1-02 as, "The DOD activities that contribute to unified action by the US Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions."⁹

In the absence of formal joint definitions for the terms capability and capacity, the Rand Arroyo Center study, *Building Partner Capabilities for Coalition Operations*, describes capability as “the ability to perform a function” and capacity as “the extent of a capability present.”¹⁰ Authors occasionally and incorrectly mix and match these terms in current writing about partner capacity building. In short, capability describes the nature of functional ability a partner possesses while capacity describes the extent to which a partner can sustain and employ that capability.

U.S. strategy highlights the increased importance of qualitative partner capacity building as both ways and means to achieve our national security interests. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet outlining the U.S. Army’s concept for BPC defines it as, “The outcome of comprehensive interorganizational activities, programs, and engagements that enhance the ability of partners for security, governance, economic development, essential services, rule of law, and other critical government functions.”¹¹ The concept of BPC is often cited in national security documents as one of the primary means of achieving national security interests, but there is no current formal joint definition. BPC is clearly an outcome of security cooperation and assistance achieved through military engagement and security force assistance.

Building partner military capacity supports strengthened alliances composed of partners whose professional, civilian-led militaries provide their own security and contribute to regional and global security efforts. U.S. investment to achieve these positive outcomes causes these nations to continue to view the U.S. as the partner of choice in collective efforts. As outlined in both the 2008 NDS and 2010 National Military

Strategy (NMS), strong alliances and partnerships promote regional security and stability.¹² Engagement to develop partner capacity is a fundamental way to achieve national objectives to build resilient alliances and partnerships that contribute directly to improved U.S. national security. Prepared by the DoD, the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF) provides directive guidance to U.S. regional and functional combatant commanders for security cooperation activities that provides a bridge from policy to operations.

The GEF outlines strategic end states and security cooperation focus areas directly applicable to BPC. Attaining these security cooperation focus areas builds operational capacity in our partners through training, equipping, and human capital development. These security cooperation efforts produce lasting institutional development that leaves our partners with combined operations capacity with or in lieu of U.S. resources.¹³

A comparison of the 2012 DSG to the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) reveals an increasing U.S. reliance on allies and partners to achieve national security objectives. The DSG highlights the importance of BPC efforts to create the capability within partners necessary to shoulder this increasing burden. Rebalancing regional priorities, force reductions, and restationing choices significantly increases reliance on critical partners across the Combatant Commanders' regions. As a result, the U.S. must make intelligent decisions about how and where we engage, what we focus on, and what we leave behind in terms of capability and capacity for our partners. In light of increasing expectations of our partners and decreasing resources available to affect

them, what are the best ways to produce enduring, self-sustainable and mutually beneficial capacity in them?¹⁴

Achieving U.S. strategic ends will increasingly hinge on capable partners willing to commit to multilateral coalitions to address regional and global security challenges. General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, identified the importance of international cooperation and promotion of “multilateral security approaches”¹⁵ in response to security challenges as one of his key efforts in his Strategic Direction to the Joint Force in February 2012. The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Raymond Odierno, reinforces this perspective in the face of looming budget constraints on the U.S. Army’s ability to conduct stability operations in the future. He stated that “...we’ll rely more on other partners to assist us as we do stability operations.”¹⁶ Therefore, the key impact of drawdown is increased reliance on partners to share burdens, especially regionally and especially for stability operations globally.

Acknowledging the power of multilateral action, our national security strategy highlights the importance of BPC in other nations, a comprehensive spectrum of effort including governance, security, economic development, essential services, rule of law and critical governance functions.¹⁷ This proposal focuses on the application of our military instrument of power on the security function of BPC, nested in the greater “whole of government” BPC approach. More specifically, it focuses on effectively building the security capability of our newer, less developed NATO partners. The primary means to accomplish this is through military engagement. As defined in Joint Publication 1-02, military engagement is the “routine contact and interaction between individuals or elements of the Armed Forces of the United States and those of another

nation's armed forces, or foreign and domestic civilian authorities or agencies to build trust and confidence, share information, coordinate mutual activities, and maintain influence."¹⁸

The Impact of the DSG on NATO Partnership

Our shift away from Europe presents our long-standing European partners with reasonable questions about U.S. commitment. Certainly, they are carefully considering the resulting impact of U.S. expectations for greater investment on their part in regional and global security issues. Rapidly following release of the new Defense Strategic Guidance, the Department of Defense announced U.S. force cuts in Europe, specifically the elimination of two U.S. Army brigade combat teams (BCT) from the existing force structure there. While this decision mirrors an earlier Bush Administration plan to reduce BCT strength in U.S. Army Europe, it reverses the Obama administration's April 2011 position to maintain four BCTs in Europe and provides cause for NATO partners to reevaluate U.S. commitment.

Secretary Philip Hammond, the Defense Secretary of the United Kingdom, provided a measured response to these anticipated reductions when he stated, "Reductions in U.S. troop numbers are not going to be welcomed by European allies in the alliance."¹⁹ Further, he said European members of NATO must "respond in a mature way" to U.S. plans and recognize U.S. decisions are a result of budget pressure very similar to what European nations are facing.²⁰ While his remarks acknowledge the strategic conditions influencing U.S. decisions, the observations he provided only days after Secretary Panetta released the DSG highlight the nature of European partner concerns.

Our NATO partners will logically evaluate the basis of U.S. strategic decisions impacting the NATO alliance. The DSG and subsequent U.S. explanations supporting changes in focus and force structure clearly outline the strategic considerations influencing these decisions. Our NATO partners will assess, no doubt, the unstated objectives of U.S. engagement as well. As described in the NMS, access to forward locations for power projection remains critical to U.S. national security interests.²¹ It is reasonable to assume our NATO partners see U.S. objectives to sustain access to critical nodes for regional and global response, in conjunction with NATO partners or without. Gary Schmitt, director of advanced strategic studies at the American Enterprise Institute, opines that the U.S. presence in Europe is more to support rapid force projection and less about European partnerships.²² Given our NATO partners' legitimate concerns, what are the most effective and reassuring ways for the U.S. to engage to assure them of our commitment?

Historically, the United States demonstrated commitment to our NATO partners through physical presence on the European continent, specifically in the substantial military forces stationed there. Sixty years of presence in Europe produced expanding circles of multinational partnership through NATO collective security preparedness, then engagement through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, and then through multinational efforts in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Although subjective in nature, this sustained engagement produced long-term, positive impacts on our partners' military capacity. The resulting professionalization, modernization and interoperability of NATO militaries must neither be undervalued nor lost. Sustained U.S. engagement in combined efforts with NATO partners significantly impacted the strength

of European collective security capacity. While physical presence and its resulting engagement have historically sustained partner confidence, we can sustain this critical engagement economically. Even with future force reductions, the U.S. can mitigate the risk to partner confidence through training partnerships that improve their capability and capacity.

Given agreement between the U.S. executive and legislative branches on defense budget cuts now in practice, "reversing the strategy and the impending cuts...seems a long shot."²³ The resulting resource reductions will shape the ways and means available. The U.S. strategy must build effective partners through sustained security assistance and cooperation. The desired strategic ends must maintain partner trust, further develop partner capacity, and maintain U.S. access to critical areas that support force projection requirements. Overall, any strategy the U.S. pursues must reinforce partner confidence in our commitment to the alliance and them.

General George Joulwan, a former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, remarked, "This about the fourth time we have downsized and reorganized our military forces. Unfortunately, it never is predictive of what's going to happen."²⁴ This correctly implies that the U.S. must mitigate the risk presented by reduced force structure by ensuring we have dependable partners. In NATO's case, multinational military exercises effectively create confidence by improving interoperability, improving tactical proficiency, and establishing leader and unit relationships that build confidence in our commitment. These results promote dependable partners. Focusing our efforts on exercise engagements can provide the effect that permanently stationed forces once achieved in Europe. The U.S. strategy must produce an effect that, as General Joulwan states,

"...reassures our allies and partners who share our values and ideals. This is particularly important in Europe."²⁵

Engagement must be consistent with existing partner capacity. Our development efforts with NATO partners from Eastern Europe will focus on institutional reform and building training capacity while engagement with our long-term, peer allies will focus more on combined training and operational efforts to sustain and improve interoperability. Given limited means, the most effective way to sustain and improve our European partners' security capacity is through constructive military-to-military engagements that produce self-sustaining capabilities. These must continue to improve collective training proficiency for organizational units and headquarters interoperability of partner nations in NATO led multinational formations.

Multinational military exercises build capability in our developing NATO partners, especially those continuing to modernize and transform their militaries under financially austere conditions. Recent operational experience demonstrates NATO's increasing reliance on these developing partners in NATO-led efforts in Afghanistan. Their commitment, demonstrated by troop contributions to Afghanistan, remains crucial to U.S. interests.²⁶ Displayed daily in theaters like Afghanistan, the capabilities of these partners are a direct result of shared relationships and training achieved through combined training exercises in Europe.²⁷

General Odierno stated that the U.S. will sustain relationships, build partner capacity, and meet combined exercise requirements through rotational unit deployments that augment a smaller U.S. force structure in Europe.²⁸ These rotational forces are critical to sustaining engagement in the form of combined training and

readiness exercises that build capability and leave residual partner capacity in place. To achieve these effects, the U.S. must maintain engagement over time and focus on incrementally developing self-sustaining capabilities in our partners. These types of multinational, multi-echelon exercises are routinely conducted by the 7A JMTTC, either at existing comprehensive U.S. facilities in Germany or exported to training facilities in other host countries.²⁹

As the U.S. implements this new defense strategy that reduces both focus and force structure in Europe, the 7A JMTTC provides a comprehensive set of “ways” and “means” to sustain our critical relationships with partners in Europe. The 7A JMTTC capacity includes the U.S. Army’s only maneuver combat training center outside the United States. Additionally, the 7A JMTTC provides training capabilities for U.S. and NATO partners from individual professional development, unit collective training proficiency through the brigade level, to combined headquarters level exercises. These assets have generated capability in NATO partners that provide telling examples of security cooperation that achieves the desired “ends” of tangible and lasting capacity in our partners.

The U.S. must sustain collective European commitment to mutual regional and global objectives. The comprehensive U.S. national strategy depends on effective integration of all the instruments of national power. The U.S. can effectively apply the military instrument in various ways as a visible and powerful means to sustain critical partnerships across Europe. As stated in the 2010 NSS, the foundations of U.S. strategy are traditional allies with shared history, values and security interests. Further, “...our relationship with our European allies remains the cornerstone for U.S.

engagement with the world and is the catalyst for international action.”³⁰ Enduring U.S. interests in Europe rely on a strong NATO alliance. This alliance must be capable of maintaining regional stability, prosperity, democracy and security; be willing to act multilaterally in response to global security issues, and it establishes conditions for productive relations with non-NATO regional powers like Russia.³¹

The Role of the Combat Training Center in Building Partner Capacity

One of the ways USEUCOM affects partner capacity is through military-to-military training exercises and exchanges with partner countries like Romania, Poland, and other former Eastern Bloc countries. Implemented to increase troop contributing nation capabilities for specific operational theaters, these training exercises and exchanges have produced lasting capabilities in these countries that surpass the immediate operational requirements to support NATO efforts Afghanistan. The EUCOM security cooperation strategy employs a broad spectrum of tools to impact partner capability, but these exchanges create sustainable military capability in our partners at a relatively low cost.

U.S. engagement methods must leave behind self-sustainable capability at the conclusion of each engagement with partner nations to achieve the greatest gain at least cost. Producing enduring institutional capacity in NATO partners through a program of military engagement remains the most cost effective way to sustain strong U.S. relationships. Growing competition for decreasing U.S. military resources in Europe requires carefully planned engagement to improve this institutional training capacity.

The ways currently available in Europe in the form of the 7A JMTC do not require significant redesign to achieve this objective. However, the U.S. must carefully define

the measures of effectiveness that describe the level of self-sustaining capacity achieved. Those assessments then directly affect the next round of engagement with those partners. Routine assessment ensures that the U.S. builds capability with each engagement and achieves positive return from our efforts.

The DSG implies greater reliance on partner capacity to secure national security interests. As security cooperation activities receive greater attention and a more substantial share of available resources, the U.S. must develop objective measures of performance and effectiveness to guide programming decisions. Measuring the effectiveness of capacity building activities remains a significant challenge for associated U.S. security cooperation programs. Because of this, the U.S. must be able to measure the actual impact of its engagement programs on resulting capacity developed by and in partners. A recent Rand study of the U.S. Global Train and Equip Program, the “1206 Program,”³² reveals that the U.S. lacks a formal, empirical method to measure the outcome of capacity-building programs.³³

This Rand study finds that current assessment methods for security cooperation activities are largely subjective in nature. In general, implementers of security cooperation activities can articulate positive impacts of these programs, but these assessments lack formality and standardization. The study also reveals that in most cases, U.S. assessments are conducted by the program implementers and, therefore, are subject to bias or the perception of bias on the part of the implementers.³⁴ The Rand study offers worthy recommendations for developing objective assessment methods specifically for 1206 Program management that can be applied to all U.S. security

cooperation activities. Regardless of the security cooperation ways employed, the framework to assess U.S. investment in BPC programs requires further study.

The expansive body of internal evaluations of U.S. combat training centers offers a solution to this assessment dilemma. Army Regulation 350-50, The Combat Training Center Program, outlines a proven model for training center development that can be readily applied to improve partner country training centers.³⁵ Built on decades of training center experience, U.S. training doctrine outlines effective outcome-based assessments of training program impact. In the near term, applying training center methods and doctrinal assessments provide a measure of a partner's capability and readiness to assume operational responsibilities to address shared security challenges. In the long term, assessment measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of resources applied to U.S. combat training centers can be applied to partner nation training capacity developed as a result of U.S. security cooperation activities. Effective assessment criteria exist now to measure both the impact of activities on near-term capability and long-term capacity in partner countries.

Between the end of the war in Vietnam and OPERATION DESERT STORM, the U.S. Army significantly improved its tactical and operational proficiency by institutionalizing training methods including the establishment of four combat training centers. Three maneuver training centers focused on small unit to brigade level proficiency include the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, and the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTTC), now called JMRC at Hohenfels, Germany. Additionally, the U.S. Army established the Battle Command Training Program at Fort Leavenworth to improve

proficiency of division and higher level headquarters. Combined with doctrine revision and other professionalization efforts, these combat training centers revolutionized training producing the U.S. Army as a predominant military land force.³⁶ Informed by these examples, employing existing combat training centers and investing in developing partner training center capabilities is a clear focus area for U.S. security cooperation activities with partner countries.

If built on the construct outlined in Army Regulation 350-50, The Combat Training Program, combat training centers provide a forum not only for developing unit proficiency, but also provide for land power and joint doctrine experimentation and validation. The integration of the pillars of the combat training centers creates an environment that rigorously tests leaders, units, equipment, and doctrine.³⁷ The outcome of this process can be then updated, refined and disseminated across the entire military force. The combat training centers sustain this continuous process through frequent unit rotations focused on training units that also produce constructive impact on the rest of the military. These combat training centers provide information and transformational effects across the elements of doctrine, operations, training, leadership and education, materiel, personnel and facilities. Therefore, combat training centers should also provide a substantial way to impart lasting capability and capacity change in U.S. partners.

Military capacity is developed best through recurring and sustained military-to-military engagements that improve the target audience's ability to build and sustain their own training capability between engagements.³⁸ Improved professional training capacity through doctrine, training methods, institutional structure, and professional trainers has

a long lasting impact on a partner's military capacity. Professionalization of training methods and doctrine produces enduring, constructive impacts that surpass other ways of building capacity, including providing equipment and facilities through foreign military aid or sales. Admiral James Stavridis makes the point that enduring capacity results from "...investment in people, not materiel."³⁹ BPC investment in military professionalization, institutional training capability, and shared doctrinal understanding yields benefits that providing equipment and infrastructure alone and at high cost cannot. If the ways are to be limited, the U.S. is prudent to focus on helping our partners build lasting training capacity of their own.

Building combat training center capacity in partner countries provides a foundation for sustainable national military capacity. With their own combat training center, partner nations possess the facilities, tools, methods and institutional approach to test and validate combat proficiency in units. Nations with their own functional combat training center have the means to apply doctrinal concepts in a replicated training environment that produces functional doctrine, techniques, tactics and procedures. This developing knowledge impacts not only the training unit, but permeates the entire military organization through institutional systems as doctrine. Sustained military capacity is the result of both immediate proficiency gains plus long-term doctrinal advances disseminated across the organization.

A functional combat training center provides the vehicle for partners to gain self-confidence. Partners recognize the benefits gleaned by U.S. forces at their own combat training centers. Combat training center capacity provides partners with the means to validate units for operational employment in response to national needs or as part of a

multilateral approach to regional or global security challenges. Partners gain distinct confidence in themselves with an organic means to validate their units for employment. The confidence at unit level that results from rigorous training and evaluation in a combat training center environment reaches broader audiences than just the training unit 's leaders and personnel. A combat training center develops confidence in unit capabilities for the short term and in institutional capacity for the long term.

Combat training center capacity provides a platform to conduct multinational exercises that improve understanding, interoperability and trust between the U.S. and regional partners. General Carter Ham, a former USAREUR commander, identified the need to increase interoperability and capabilities of allies and coalition partners. The critical importance of this increases in the context of emerging security challenges.⁴⁰ Multinational exercises, conducted in a rigorous combat training center environment establish relationships between militaries. As partners develop combat training center capacity, the U.S. should encourage them to host multilateral exercise with regional partners. By doing this, the effectiveness of a combat training center on proficiency is advertised to others. More importantly, as a recent Rand study recommended, positive exposure of a partner's capability serves to build their confidence and pride, especially when the U.S. and others actively seek to train at their center.⁴¹

Currently, U.S. combat training centers have substantial resources invested in hard-stand facilities and information technology-based simulation and information capture tools. The history of all three maneuver combat training centers reveals that early success was a product not of technology but of trained and knowledgeable trainers, exercise control personnel, and capable opposing forces. While U.S. partners

are awed by the technology available at our combat training centers, capacity developing efforts with them should focus on the development of human capital – the trainers, exercise designers, controllers, and supporting analysts. True combat training center capability can be achieved with small investments in people, existing training areas, and equipment that establish a foundation for future improvements given available resources. Investment of this kind can develop limited technology capabilities very rapidly that achieve the unit proficiency and institutional impact identified earlier.

Relationships built in combat training center exercises set foundations of future coalitions. The current USAREUR commander, General Mark Hertling, highlighted the impact of multinational training at combat training centers and integrating the existing capability of 7A JMTC to help partner nations develop similar capabilities. He said “Finding new ways to build partner capacity and partnerships, building on the relationships USAREUR has already developed, will help the U.S. Army meet the nation’s strategic challenges and prepare alliances before the next war begins.”⁴² General Hertling called the training capacity at 7A JMTC the “crown jewel” of the ways available in USAREUR to develop partners and sustain relationships.⁴³

Training elements at 7A JMTC provide regional impact to NATO partners by offering individual and collective training at facilities in Grafenweohr and Hohenfels, Germany and by providing training to other locations in Europe. More importantly, 7A JMTC capabilities serve as a model for developing capabilities in Romania, Croatia, Poland and other countries.⁴⁴ As General Odierno pointed out in recent remarks, the U.S. will continue to develop partnerships and partner capability at multiple levels at the existing 7A JMTC complex as part of U.S. efforts to sustain NATO partnerships.⁴⁵ In the

absence of national-level combat training center capacity of their own, NATO partners can continue to develop operational proficiency and interoperability through participation in multinational training exercises at U.S. facilities in Germany.

The development of the Romanian Land Force Combat Training Center in Cincu, Romania, provides one of the best examples of the impact of U.S. capacity building focused on training center development.⁴⁶ Motivated by the training capacity observed at 7A JMTC facilities, senior Romanian Defense officials directed the Romanian Land Forces to transform an existing artillery live fire training facility into a combat training center to improve the combat readiness of land forces units. Specifically, the Romanians desired their own ability to train and validate Romanian forces to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over a five-year period, the Romanians developed a functional combat training center based on the U.S. model. The U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) provided assistance in the form of equipment and funding. USAREUR worked in conjunction with the ODC, providing 7A JMTC trainers and assets in recurring exercises at Cincu. These U.S. trainers provided expertise and modeled observer-controller-trainer performance and behavior derived from U.S. combat training center experience. In that time, the Romanians achieved the initial objective of developing the capability to rigorously prepare and validate Romanian units for operational deployments, something they had relied on external capability to achieve prior to 2008.

The Romanian combat training center at Cincu provides live, constructive and virtually linked training to individuals, leaders, and units up to brigade level. Its capabilities include instrumented, observer-controller-trainer mentored training in a

complex training environment. Additionally, the Romanians have successfully integrated live and constructive simulation training to simultaneously train two battalion task forces and a brigade combat team headquarters in an integrated exercise. On their own initiative, the Romanians received NATO and 7A JMTTC counter-improvised explosive device (C-IED) training and developed their own equally effective C-IED training capability at their combat training center.

The rapid development of training capacity at this Romanian combat training center highlights the potential associated with U.S. investment in developing NATO partners' own combat training center capability. Once established, this capability leads to sustained military partner capacity demanded by the new U.S. security strategy. This Romanian example and others, like development of training capacity at the Croatian Combat Training Center in Slunj, Croatia, demonstrate that developing NATO partners are willing to invest available resources to build the foundation for sustainable military capacity as members of the alliance. While U.S. assistance with combat training center development cannot achieve all of the security cooperation objectives alone, the comparison of U.S. investment in this capacity against other training and equipping goals shows that combat training center development remains a high outcome, low investment opportunity to pursue U.S. national security interests.

As an example, in Fiscal Year 2010, the U.S. expended \$13.9 million in Section 1206 funds to support Romania's training and preparation efforts to support NATO efforts in Afghanistan.⁴⁷ The combat training center development efforts by the 7A JMTTC cost less than \$300,000 in the same period.⁴⁸ The 7A JMTTC support included multiple deployments of C-IED mobile training teams to both Cincu and training unit

home stations to conduct staff and small unit training programs. The main contribution of the 7A JMTC was deployment of mobile training teams comprised of subject matter experts to the combat training center at Cincu to augment the Romanian staff during the conduct of multiple brigade and battalion mission rehearsal exercises. As a result of this assistance, the Romanians assumed training validation responsibility for deploying Romanian units at their own combat training center and conducted comprehensive C-IED training for Romanian forces comparable to training previously received at U.S. and other NATO training centers. While U.S. security assistance remains vital to Romanian efforts, the Romanians have witnessed the impact of their own combat training center capacity and are invested in sustaining and improving the capabilities there.

Risk

The U.S. will not be able to rely solely on developing combat training center capacity to build the partnerships necessary to support our national security interests. Clearly, this way of building partner capacity is land power focused. While multinational combat training center exercises can improve joint and combined interoperability, they primarily impact partner capacity in the land domain. The value of the combat training center outputs is centered more in the long-term institutional DOTLMPF effects. It is only one of a set of ways and means to develop capable and confident partners. To mitigate this risk, U.S. security cooperation activities must be carefully balanced across the partner's service components based on the capabilities needed.

The development of training center capability, particularly maneuver combat training capabilities, is not a "one size fits all" proposition. The U.S. must carefully select appropriate partners for investment based on existing capability and capacity, a demonstrated willingness to invest in themselves within their means, and a willingness

to sustain the capability over time.⁴⁹ Partners must have a basic level of organic training capacity in existence before attempting to develop comprehensive combat training center capabilities consistent with the U.S. model. While technology is not a limiting factor for success, partners must possess training doctrine, capable professional officers and non-commissioned officers, training equipment, and training facilities to support development of such capability. The U.S. can mitigate the risks associated with appropriate partner selection by applying the recommended framework outlined in Rand's study on building partner capabilities for coalition operations. Although focused on identifying partners to fulfill niche capabilities in support of U.S. led coalition operations, Rand's methodology for matching capability gaps with appropriate partners leads security assistance planners to consider the factors outlined above.⁵⁰

With all security cooperation investments, asymmetry of U.S. and partner interests present risk to the success of partner capacity development. U.S. interests generally focus on two outcomes, 1) creation of effective partners for integration into U.S.-led coalitions, or 2) creation of partners who can respond to internal or regional security challenges without additional U.S. assistance.⁵¹ For many potential partners, the second outcome is mutually beneficial while the first outcome may be contrary to their own self-interest. To mitigate the risk of conflicting interests and increase partner commitment, U.S. BPC efforts must help improve partner capability to provide internal security, transform their military, and increase the partner's international prestige.⁵² Additionally, it is logical that lower cost capabilities for development and sustainment are attractive to all involved parties.⁵³ Therefore, developing combat training center

capacity in appropriate partners addresses the risk associated with national interest asymmetry.

Is the CTC Development Model Applicable Outside of NATO?

Developing the combat training center capacity in NATO partners has yielded proven results in partner contributions to U.S. interests in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and most recently in Libya. Do conditions warrant exporting this model to other U.S. geographic combatant commanders for use in pursuit of U.S. security cooperation objectives? Expectations of the partnership-focused strategic approach do not change by region; therefore, it is reasonable to consider the applicability of this model of partner capacity building to other areas critical to U.S. security interests.

In the Asia-Pacific region, the defense strategy relies heavily on strategic reach achieved through sea and air power, but the region is home to seven of the ten largest armies in the world. Furthermore, 22 of the 28 nations in the region have Army generals as their chiefs of defense. For these reasons, General Odierno highlights the important role U.S. land forces will play engaging with our partners there.⁵⁴ Building on existing multinational exercises and developing partner combat training center capability in the region offers a constructive way and means to engage with and develop multiple partners. U.S. engagement with Australia and New Zealand demonstrate ongoing pursuit of increased training capacity in both countries that strengthens the enduring partnership with both allies. It also expands U.S. outreach to other regional militaries through existing relationships held by Australia and New Zealand.⁵⁵

Clear strategic focus on the Asia-Pacific region and a continued reliance on stalwart NATO partners in Europe, as acknowledged in the NSS, make security cooperation considerations fairly straightforward. Regions of lesser stated priority have

no less need for carefully developed security cooperation. The U.S. faces considerable resource challenges for security cooperation in Africa and Central and South America, where conditions tend toward less stability and security capabilities are less well-developed. In response to the defense strategic guidance and budget impacts, the Chief of Staff of the Army observed that the U.S. must employ "innovative, low-cost and small-footprint approaches to conduct engagements, maintain stability and build partner capacity."⁵⁶ The combat training center model offers a way to satisfy those criteria and produce all the DOTLMPF benefits demonstrated by the examples in Europe referenced earlier. Because national capability can yield significant prestige for partners, development of partner combat training center capabilities opens the way for sustained capacity improvement, stronger relationships and improved access to our strategic partners.

Conclusion

Any successful future engagement strategy to build partner capacity in Europe will focus efforts on recurring, developmental engagement at the individual, small unit collective levels. Engagement and exercises must also challenge appropriate combined headquarters to respond multilaterally to regional and global contingencies. USEUCOM security cooperation engagement priorities and plans must align security cooperation efforts with, and be reinforced by, security assistance programs with each of our partners. Security cooperation plans must judiciously apply available forces and leverage CONUS-based means, such as we currently do through the National Guard-resourced State Partnership Program and through rotational unit deployments to Europe as envisioned by Secretary of Defense Panetta.⁵⁷ Additional ways include maximizing multinational, multi-echeloned training opportunities at existing U.S. and

partner nation combat training centers in Europe as well as seeking affordable exercise opportunities for our partners in CONUS combat training center venues.

Helping partners develop their own combat training center capacity provides a relatively cost effective way to bridge the gap between desired ends and the available means. This approach satisfies the following three tenets of a comprehensive BPC approach: it creates recurring engagement that sustains partner trust and confidence; it develops enduring capabilities that prevent and deter regional instability by improving operational capacity in the short term and self-sustaining institutional capacity in the long term; and it focuses on partner nation human capital, providing the vehicle for lasting impact on our partners' professional security force capability.⁵⁸ The U.S. can build and sustain the partnerships required by the DSG to secure mutual security interests through carefully developed BPC efforts. As part of a comprehensive BPC approach, the U.S. can help others develop their own combat training center capacity with limited investment. The U.S. model of combat training centers produce constructive military proficiency in our partners that sustain both their capability and willingness to share the security challenges presented by the future strategic environment.

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